



Aalto University
School of Business

Mikkeli Campus

MEASURING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GREEN STRATEGIES IN THE FAST FOOD INDUSTRY - A CONSUMER ATTITUDE PERSPECTIVE

Kasper Kohi

International Business
Bachelor's Thesis
Instructor: Susan Grinsted
Date of submission: 06.04.2020

Aalto University
School of Business
Bachelor's program in International Business
Mikkeli Campus



Aalto University
School of Business

Mikkeli Campus

MEASURING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GREEN STRATEGIES IN THE FAST FOOD INDUSTRY A - CONSUMER ATTITUDE PERSPECTIVE

Kasper Kohi

International Business
Bachelor's Thesis
Instructor: Susan Grinsted
Date of submission: 06.04.2020

Aalto University
School of Business
Bachelor's program in International Business
Mikkeli Campus

Author: Kasperi Kohi

Title of Thesis: Measuring the Effectiveness of Green strategies in the Fast Food Industry – a Consumer Attitude Perspective

Date: 6 April 2020

Degree: Bachelor of Science in Economics and Business Administration

Supervisor: Susan Grinsted

Objectives

The main objectives of this study were to analyze the effects of green strategies implemented by the three largest fast food chains on consumer attitudes in Finland. It attempted to answer the question of to what extent the attitudes have changed, and what is the correlation between the levels of green strategies and consumer attitudes on Hesburger, McDonalds and Burger King. In addition, it examined the companies' differences in green strategies and green marketing, in order to discover any possible green washing.

Summary

The method of this study was a quantitative survey measuring attitudes, and a quasi-quantitative approach to examine the green strategies of the companies. The sample consisted of Finnish high school and university students.

Conclusion

The results of the survey indicate that Hesburger is seen as the most sustainable of the three by a statistically significant difference, while general attitudes towards the three companies did not differ. The results of analyzing the green strategies of the companies showed that Hesburger has also invested considerably more on green strategies. Therefore, the study did find that green strategies do have a positive effect on consumer attitudes in terms of sustainability. Moreover, no green washing was found when examining the companies, as the levels of green promotion and green strategies were quite balanced. Finally, it is recommended for companies from all fields of businesses to implement green strategies, as it has been proved to have a positive effect on consumer attitudes.

Key Words: *Sustainability, Marketing, Green consumers, Consumer attitudes*

Language: English

Grade:

COVER PAGE

TITLE PAGE

ABSTRACT

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| 1.0 Introduction | 1 |
| 1.1 Background | 1 |
| 1.2 Research Problem | 1 |
| 1.3 Research Questions | 2 |
| 1.4 Research Objectives | 2 |
| 2.0 Literature Review | 2 |
| 2.1. Sustainability Definition | 3 |
| 2.2. Green Marketing Definition | 4 |
| 2.3. The Importance of Green Marketing | 6 |
| 2.4. Green Marketing Strategies | 8 |
| 2.5. Consumer Attitude Measurement | 10 |
| 2.6. Theoretical Framework | 12 |
| 2.7 Conclusion | 12 |
| 3.0 Methodology | 13 |
| 3.1 Research Questions and Hypothesis Statement | 13 |
| 3.2 Research Design | 15 |
| 3.3. Limitations of the Method | 16 |
| 4.0. Findings | 17 |
| 4.1. Survey Findings | 17 |
| 4.1.1. Demographics | 17 |
| 4.1.2. Sustainability Questions | 17 |

| | |
|---|----|
| 4.1.3 Findings on the NEP Scale | 21 |
| 4.1.4 Other Findings | 23 |
| 4.2. Green Actions of Hesburger, McDonalds and Burger King in Finland | 23 |
| 5.0. Analysis | 25 |
| 6.0. Discussion | 28 |
| 6.1. Significance of the Findings | 28 |
| 6.2. Limitations of the Study | 29 |
| 7.0. Conclusion | 29 |
| 7.1. Main Findings | 29 |
| 7.2. Implications for International Business | 30 |
| 7.3. Suggestions for Future Research | 30 |
| References | 31 |
| APPENDICIES | 33 |
| Appendix 1 | 33 |

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

The impending climate change has commenced a new megatrend of sustainable consumption, especially in the western countries. Today, an increasing amount of companies in various fields of business aim to use this consumer behavior trend as a competitive advantage. Green actions have, indeed, been proven to be a highly beneficial competitive advantage in many fields (Yildirim et al., 2016). In recent years, this has correspondingly occurred in the fast food industry. Companies like Hesburger, McDonalds and Burger King have recognized the opportunity in consumers' increasing demand for sustainable products in the food industry too. However, in a field such as fast food, which is widely perceived as relatively unsustainable, it is not for certain that consumer attitudes and perceptions on the companies will change easily. When the main product has historically evolved around red meat, which is known to have a very damaging effect on the environment, and products packaged unsustainably, it is problematic to convince increasingly environmentally conscious consumers of a sudden change to sustainability. (Sen, 2016)

1.2 Research Problem

While studies on consumer attitudes have been conducted numerous times in the history, the attitudes in terms of sustainability, on the other hand, remain somewhat unexplored. As the importance of sustainability is only likely to increase in the near future, it is imperative to expand the research on the most effective ways of changing consumer attitudes, especially on sustainability. During the past few years, an increasing amount of companies from widely perceived unsustainable fields of businesses have noticed the growing environmentally conscious consumer segment. For example, companies in the fast food industry, generally seen as quite unsustainable, have started to explore ways in which to reach this segment. However, as this phenomenon is still rather recent, there is a gap in research on firstly, is it possible to change consumer attitudes on unsustainable fields, and secondly, what are the most efficient ways to do it. (Kuchinka et al., 2018) Therefore, this study aims to find out whether or not the green strategies of the three major fast

food chains in Finland, Hesburger, McDonalds and Burger King have, in fact, succeeded in shaping consumer attitudes in terms of sustainability, and in general.

1.3 Research Questions

The questions this research will aim to answer are the following:

- 1) How have Finnish customer attitudes on fast food chains' sustainability changed after their implementation of green marketing?
- 2) Is there a causal relationship between consumer attitudes and green marketing in the fast food industry?
- 3) Are Hesburger, McDonalds and Burger King in fact implementing green strategies, or merely green washing?

1.4 Research Objectives

This research has the following objectives:

- 1) To find out whether the green strategies and green marketing in fast food have made consumers see fast food companies as more sustainable
- 2) To explore the concrete level of green strategies Hesburger, McDonalds and Burger King implement and to examine whether it matches to their green marketing
- 3) to investigate the possible differences in consumer attitudes towards Hesburger, McDonalds and Burger King.

2.0 Literature Review

For several decades, there has been a consensus in academia that the global economy thrives from consumption, and marketing plays a major role in increasing it (e.g. Polonsky, 1994; Cronin et al, 2011). Simultaneously, growing concerns about

the natural environment have risen, thus leaving companies in a dilemma: How to ensure economic growth by marketing while protecting the natural environment, when increasing consumption is one of the main threats to it? Throughout the years, various theories have revolved around green marketing, its possibilities, effects and the correct ways to implement it. This review will focus on reviewing and finding the suitable and up-to-date definitions for green marketing, sustainability and consumer attitudes. In addition, it will introduce and critically analyze the major theories related to green practices, green marketing practices and measuring consumer attitudes. Defining sustainability will work as a starting point in examining the existing literature on green strategies.

2.1. Sustainability Definition

Sustainability has been defined in various different ways in the past, creating confusion and debates in the field (Johnston et al., 2007). The earliest widely accepted definition of sustainability was founded in a report of the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987, by the term sustainable development. The definition was: "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." (Brundtland, 1987) This definition was the foundation for sustainability as a concept and has been used as the basis in almost all future definitions. It cultivates the main idea of progressing economically, while remembering to preserve the environment for future generations as well. However, approximately 140 definitions were made in just two years after Brundtland's one and with even more since then, it is very problematic to distinguish the currently relevant definitions. This has led to different institutions using a specific definition suited to their agenda. As is stated by Johnston et al. (2007): "--the reality is that we have seen a systematic mis-appropriation of the term 'sustainable development' by some influential sectors of society to justify continuation, for as long as possible, of development patterns that are running in the face of a sustainable and equitable future." Similar ideas are presented by Morelli (2011). However, he takes a less critical approach to the issue, claiming that different professions have simply attempted to adapt the definition to their specific subject. As a result, the term has evolved into ecological sustainability, societal sustainability and economical sustainability, to name a few.

Morelli (2011) proceeds to define environmental sustainability, designed to be used by environmental professionals. His definition is: “--a condition of balance, resilience, and interconnectedness that allows human society to satisfy its needs while neither exceeding the capacity of its supporting ecosystems to continue to regenerate the services necessary to meet those needs nor by our actions diminishing biological diversity.” Now going back to the earliest definition of sustainability by Brundtland (1987), Morelli’s definition, while being significantly longer, does not necessarily bring anything new to the concept. It is merely restating the original foundation of sustainability in a more complex manner. Therefore, it could be argued that even today, Brundtland’s definition of sustainability is very relevant and applicable. Thus, this research will be using Brundtland’s definition when referring to sustainability.

2.2. Green Marketing Definition

Green marketing as a concept is not necessarily very new, as the earliest literature around it has been published around the 1970s. However, the definition has since evolved, and it has adapted to society’s growing environmental concerns. The early definitions are more abstract, while the later literature has refined the concept to a more tangible form (Groening et al., 2017). Still, even today scholars have very differing opinions on what the correct definition is. This is visible in the various different names for the subject. The terms green marketing, ecological marketing, eco-marketing, sustainable marketing and environmental marketing all refer to the same concept. An American Marketing Association (AMA) workshop in 1975 was the first one to define green marketing. Their definition was: “the study of the positive and negative aspects of marketing activities on pollution, energy depletion and nonenergy resource depletion” (Henion and Kinnear, 1976).

This definition summarizes the undeveloped understanding on green marketing at the time. Consequently, AMA’s definition has been critiqued by scholars later on. Michael Polonsky (1994), in his article, reviews the definition as a good starting point, but rightfully points out the narrowness of it. He then suggests that a more comprehensive definition is necessary with a concept like this. He defines green marketing as: “Activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchanges intended to satisfy human needs or wants, such that the satisfaction of these needs and wants occurs, with minimal detrimental impact on the natural environment.” In his definition, Polonsky (1994) brings a new point of view to green marketing: He claims that

marketing itself is in all cases harmful to the environment, and the purpose of green marketing is to merely minimize the damages.

Fuller (1999) took the next step in defining green marketing. Fuller's definition was: "The process of planning, implementing, and controlling the development, pricing, promotion, and distribution of products in a manner that satisfies the following three criteria: (i) customer needs are met, (ii) organizational goals are attained, and (iii) the process is compatible with ecosystems." With his definition, Fuller had the same goal as Polonsky: To provide a more comprehensive definition, while agreeing with the earlier base assumptions of the concept. Fuller's definition also correctly adds the idea that while green marketing is set to satisfy the needs of consumers and the environment, it has to do so by not harming the organizational goals, for it is a widely accepted fact that modern societies do not function without businesses making profits.

The next significant evolution for the definition of green marketing was introduced by Alsmadi (2007). "Green marketing is conducting all marketing activities within a framework of environmental responsibility... is a comprehensive and systematic process that seeks to influence consumer preferences in a way that encourages them to demand environmentally friendly products and help them adapt their behavioral consumption patterns accordingly." While the earlier definitions of Polonsky, Fuller and other scholars were focused solely on making the process of marketing sustainable, Alsmadi's definition adds the goal of influencing consumer behavior and attitudes to the concept. Thus, Alsmadi's definition was a noteworthy step towards the definition of green marketing today.

Violeta & Gheorghe (2009) in their journal on the green strategy mix were the first to connect the theory of 5 Ps (price, promotion, product, place and people) to green marketing, defining it as the mix of 5Ps to eco-efficiency. While the idea of green marketing being a part of the whole marketing mix had been introduced already before by for example Fuller (1999) and Polonsky (1994), this was the first time that all of the five Ps were included. However, this definition still lacks the comprehensiveness that many scholars have stated to be missing in the field. The marketing mix of 5Ps is considered to be outdated by various scholars in the field (e.g. Jackson & Ahuja, 2016).

Finally, Sharma et al. (2010) provided perhaps the most extensive definition of green marketing yet. The definition was: "Green marketing is beyond the role of linking to green customers and marketing mix, and should expand to include other aspects of corporate demand management, such as predicting demand for environmentally-friendly products, positioning and demand stimulation for recycled and remanufactured products, generating demand for build-to-order products, and building competitive advantages from a focus on environmental priorities." This definition brilliantly has a very different approach to green marketing, for the previous ones have had the presumption that with green marketing, companies should answer to customers' growing green purchase behavior, whereas here the approach comes from the companies' responsibility to also attract and propagate green behavior. This brings a whole new level of comprehensiveness to the definition.

While it may seem that the definitions generally tend to evolve to an improved, more comprehensive direction with time, some later definitions have done the contrary. The definition of Liu et al. (2012) is: "Green marketing identifies and satisfies green customers and promoting environmentally-friendly products." While this definition follows the similar principal idea of the previous definitions, it lacks the comprehensiveness needed in defining a large concept like green marketing.

After reviewing the previous definitions, this paper will be using the following definition: "Green marketing is all parts of the 7Ps (price, promotion, people, product, place, physical evidence and process) designed to promote green products, attract existing and new green customers, and shape customer attitudes towards green sustainable consumer behavior."

2.3. The Importance of Green Marketing

In the literature of green marketing, there are multiple motivations mentioned that drive companies from all fields of businesses to green marketing practices. A reason commonly agreed on is the growing demand for environmentally friendly products all around the world, which opens opportunities for increased profits. Moravcikova et al., (2017) for instance states that companies have found a competitive advantage in green marketing to be highly profitable. Furthermore, Saad (2006) suggests that "75% of consumers routinely report that they are green or prefer environmentally friendly products."

This in turn has seen the competition in green marketing grow, which is highly beneficial for the environment. While aligning on the basis that green marketing does increase customer satisfaction and profits, Luo & Bhattacharya (2006) found out in their study that companies practicing CSR with low innovation have in fact seen their levels of customer satisfaction go down, also reducing their profits. Similarly agreeing with green marketing being profitable for companies, Marthur & Marthur (2000) point out that applying green marketing strategies often produce negative stock returns. In conclusion, even though studies have found some negative effects of applying green marketing strategies, the overall results are increased profits and improved customer satisfaction (Luo & Bhattacharya, 2006).

Besides increasing revenue, studies have also found that applying green strategies will eventually reduce costs of companies in some cases. Baker (1999) states that green marketing results in great savings in production costs, as waste, energy consumption and the use of raw materials is often reduced. Applying green marketing forces companies to invest in green strategies. These investments eventually result in savings in for example waste disposal and packaging, and end up compensating themselves relatively quickly, thus leaving the firm with higher customer satisfaction and revenue, in addition to reduced production costs in the future (Cronin et al., 2011).

Another relevant reason for companies increasing their green marketing is governments' pressure to become more environmentally friendly by setting regulations. Governments have been doing this for a while, as Polonsky (1994) states: "Governments establish regulations designed to control the amount of hazardous wastes produced by firms. Many by-products of production are controlled through the issuing of various environmental licenses, thus modifying organizational behavior." While Guo et al. (2018) agrees that governmental regulations play an important role in enhancing green activities, their study also suggests that governments should support research and development of green innovations, in order to help companies with their green initiatives. A recent example of governmental regulation leading to green innovations in the fast food field would be the banning of plastic straws. In 2018, when the UK issued a plan to ban plastic straws by early 2020, McDonalds was quick to react to this and introduced paper straws in the UK (BBC, 2019).

2.4. Green Marketing Strategies

Green marketing strategies are typically divided into three main sections: green innovations, green alliances and greening the organization (Cronin et al., 2011). Green innovation includes inventing entirely new green products or services, which often strengthen the company's image as a green organization. However, while the innovation of goods and services may have an important role in innovation, studies show that there are more aspects to green innovations. According to Schumpeter (1934) innovation also includes new processes, new markets, new input sources and new industrial structures. These features apply to green innovations as well and should be considered when planning a green strategy. While the literature agrees with green innovation's great importance to green strategy, studies show that it alone is not enough to change the perceptions towards the sustainability of companies. In their recent study, Soewarno et al. (2019) suggest that green innovations themselves are not enough, and companies should apply green practices to all branches of the organization, in order to satisfy all stakeholders in the increasingly environmentally conscious society. Green alliances can refer to partnerships between two organizations with solely increasing sustainability as their goal, or the green benefits could just be one of the many reasons, and not the main one. Whatever the reason, alliances have been proven to increase green efforts in most cases (Cronin et al., 2011). Greening the organization refers to taking various actions inside the organization in order to make the whole company function sustainably. According to Cronin et al. (2011), "Greening the organization may be accomplished through green champions, green processes, and green initiatives toward supply-chain management." Adding to Cronin's point, Gurlek & Tuna (2018) rightly highlight the importance of greening the organizational culture, as it serves as a basis for green innovations and other green efforts throughout the company.

After applying the green strategies discussed earlier, it is necessary to consider the right green marketing strategies, to successfully inform the consumers on the company's green actions (Kumar & Ghodeswar, 2015). When choosing the right green marketing strategy, the importance of the green consumer segment in the specific field should be considered. (Líšková et al., 2016) Ottman (1998) conducted a research classifying green consumers into five segments: The true-blue-greens, covering 9 per cent of the population are the most environmentally conscious consumers, and are also active politically. For example, they are four times more likely to refuse to purchase products from non-green companies. Greenback greens

account for 6 per cent of the population. They are similar to the previous segment excluding the political activity. Sprouts (33%) are environmentally conscious, but they do not act accordingly in practise. They are very price-sensitive and are not willing to pay much more for green substitutes. However, the study notes that this segment can be persuaded into green consumerism with the right tools. Grouzers (19%) are typically not as aware of environmental issues as the previous segments, and do not believe green products work as substitutes to normal ones. The final segment, basic browns (33%) simply do not care about environmental issues, partly because of their struggle with daily issues of life like poverty.

However, it is important to note that the previous model was conducted 22 years ago, and since then the demand for green products has increased rapidly. Therefore, while the segments themselves may still be relevant today, the percentages are most likely outdated and should be restructured. In addition, the segments were reported to have a high correlation to income and education, indicating that consumers with lower income are more often in the two last segments (Ginsberg, 2004). Therefore, the segments will most likely not be accurate in Finland, as the study was conducted in The United States, where the salary gap is higher than in Finland (Statista, 2019).

When it comes to different levels of green marketing strategies, Ginsberg (2004) has identified four main ones, which are shown in figure 1: Lean greens, defensive greens, shaded greens and extreme greens. Lean greens' environmental actions are usually motivated by increased profits, and not the feel of responsibility. They have a small amount of green practices, but they do not promote them very often. Defensive greens are companies that have noticed the increasing importance of the green consumer segment and use green promotions and practices to strengthen their brand image and answer to both competition and criticism. Shaded greens are companies with more green practices than the two previous categories, and in many cases even a competitive advantage in the green segment. However, they choose not to identify as a solely green company, as they have a competitive advantage in another field. In other words, they promote their products firstly on other attributes, and secondly on the green aspect. Finally, extreme greens are companies that have integrated sustainable practices in all parts of the organization, and it is their driving force.

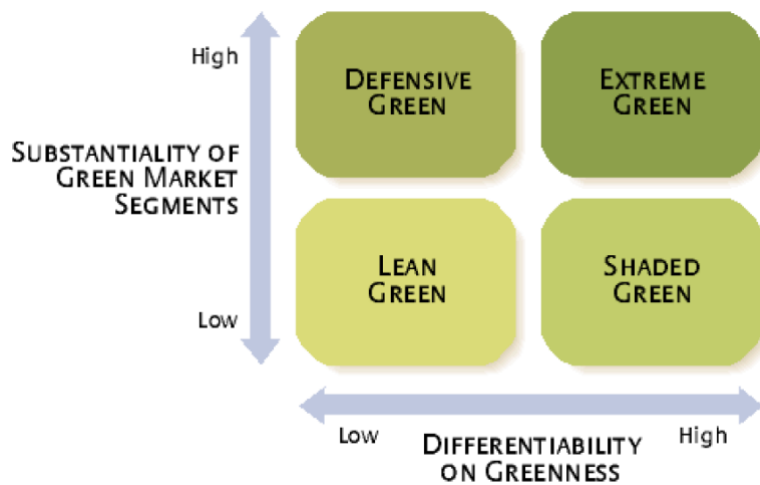


Figure 1: The green strategy matrix (Ginsberg, 2004)

In conclusion, before choosing the suitable green marketing strategy, companies should firstly identify the segment of green consumers dominant in their field of business. If a large proportion of the consumers are for example true-blue-greens, the company should consider implementing the extreme green-strategy to satisfy this segment. Secondly, the company should carefully evaluate their current level of sustainability, and not promote themselves as greener than they are. If they do, this results in consumers feeling betrayed, eventually ruining the company's reputation (Ginsberg, 2004).

2.5. Consumer Attitude Measurement

Like the previous concepts, consumer attitude is also a widely debated term in the marketing literature. Scholars have differing theories especially on how attitudes are formed. Ajzen (2001) defines consumer attitudes as "a summary evaluation of a psychological object captured in such attribute dimensions as good-bad, harmful-beneficial, pleasant-unpleasant, and likable-dislikeable." This definition is relatively widely accepted in the field. It rightly indicates that attitudes can indeed be measured, and that they are fundamentally evaluations of objects. Later on, a theory suggested by Schwartz (2006), supports Ajzen's idea and proposes that consumer attitudes are essentially similar to evaluative categorization. Schwartz even went on to suggest that there is no need to define attitudes, as they are essentially the same as category evaluation.

Perhaps one of the most dividing aspects of defining consumer attitude are the functional and constructive theories (Argiyou & Melevar, 2011). The functional theory

stems from an idea that after being exposed to an object, the attitudes formed at that moment are stored in the memory and the attitude is brought up consciously the next time the person is exposed to the object (Eagly & Chaiken 1993). This represents the classical functional theory. However, this theory caused division in the field and eventually resulted in the creation of modern functional theory (Argiyou & Melevar, 2011). While agreeing with the basic principles of attitudes being stored in memories and associated in later situations, the modern theorists believe that instead of the associations being deliberate, they happen unconsciously and spontaneously (Schlosser, 2003).

While the functional theorists believe attitudes are formed and stored in memories, constructive theorists suggest that attitudes are simply formed in the current situation of exposure, and thus can change depending on the context. (Argiyou & Melevar, 2011) The modern functional theory and the constructive theory have, in fact, some matching ideas. The modern functional theorists have agreed that circumstantial matters do affect the formation of attitudes to some degree. (Bettman) Similarly, Argiyou & Melevar (2011) state that “--although functional theory assumes that attitudes are stored in the memory, it allows for situational parameters to operate as cues for memory-based attitude retrieval.”

An example of the differences in attitudes would be when an environmentally conscious consumer has to make a decision on whether to eat in McDonalds or Hesburger. From a functional theory viewpoint, the attitude comes from the person's memory and little to nothing in the current situation affects it. On the other hand, from a constructive theory perspective, the consumer makes the decision based on the situation and environment at that moment. For example, the consumer might walk past a McDonalds advertisement promoting their sustainability, which would initially make them regard McDonalds as the more sustainable option, even though the consumer might have seen similar advertisements from Hesburger in the past.

To conclude, the differences of functional and constructive attitude theories are critical when conducting a research of consumer attitudes, for when interpreting data from a survey, the constructive theory perspective would be that the results are merely contextual and may have been affected by the environment, while the functional interpretation would be that the results of the survey come from the recipients' memory and past experiences. It is also essential to point out that none of

the theories apply to the whole population, and some theories apply to certain consumers, while a different theory might apply to others (Argiyou & Melevar, 2011).

2.6. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework in figure 2 was created on the basis of the reviewed literature. With green practices like product development, green processes and green culture, companies aim to create a more sustainable business model. These practices are then implemented to marketing with green marketing strategies, such as the four dimensions of green marketing. Eventually, the green marketing practices are set to affect the attitudes of consumers in regard to the companies' sustainability.

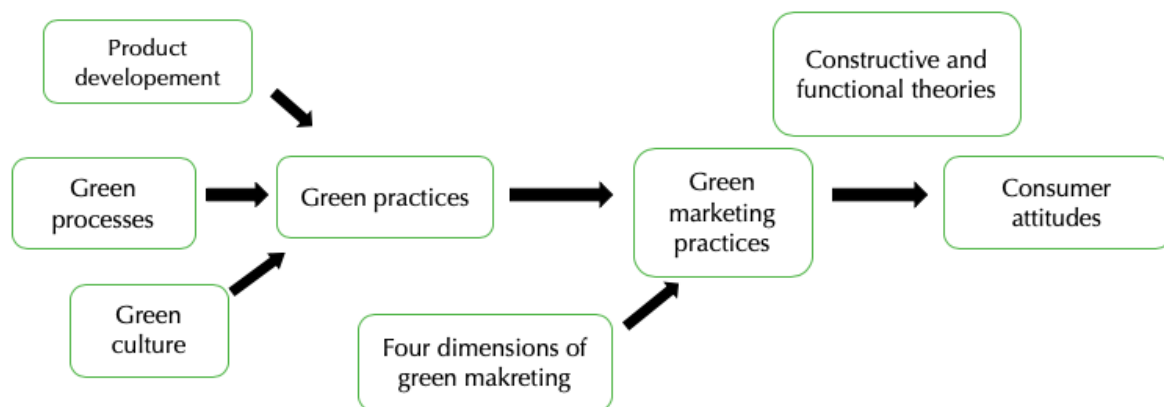


Figure 2: The theoretical framework

2.7 Conclusion

The purpose of this review was to examine the evolution of the relevant concepts to in the field, and identify the most suitable ones for this research, as well as to introduce and critically analyse the significant theories used in the research. The review demonstrates how immensely diverse the literature is in the field of green marketing, especially considering definitions. The constructive and functional attitude theory, for example, is an issue dividing scholars' views to this day. Although plenty of literature around green marketing and attitudes can be found, multiple researchers (e.g. Johnston et al., 2007; Groening et al., 2017) call for further research in the field. This shows that the concepts are in fact quite recent and are still evolving rapidly. My research will be taking the concepts of green marketing and consumer attitudes and

examining them in the context of fast food chains in Finland. After extensive review on the literature, it is evident that this perspective is yet to be discovered. Therefore, I would like to find out, whether the classic theories of green marketing strategies and consumer attitudes apply to the specific field.

3.0 Methodology

The fast food industry has historically been labeled as an unsustainable field of business. Most of the products contain red meat, which is known to have a high carbon footprint. In addition, the packaging of fast food products includes a lot of plastic, which is generally considered to be unsustainable. With the growing trend of green consumer behaviour, fast food chains have begun to transform their businesses to greener. However, the results of the reforms remain somewhat unclear, as the general perceptions on fast food's sustainability has not yet been studied in a larger scale. (Kuchinka, 2018)

3.1 Research Questions and Hypothesis Statement

The questions this research attempted answering were: (i) How have Finnish customer attitudes on fast food chains' sustainability changed after their implementation of green marketing? (ii) Is there a causal relationship between consumer attitudes and green marketing in the fast food industry? And (iii) Are Hesburger, McDonalds and Burger King in fact implementing green strategies, or merely green washing?

After considering various research methods, using a quantitative survey for the first two research questions appeared to be the most suitable method. This is mainly because statistical analysis and numerical data is necessary when measuring attitudes (Allen, 2017). While consumer attitudes can be measured via focus groups and interviews, a broader sample size was necessary in order to generalize the results and develop a broader understanding of the consumer attitudes nationwide, and that is received by a survey. It is necessary to note that when examining a concept like changing consumer attitudes over time, a longitudinal research method is necessary. In other words, the changes should be studied over a certain period of time. As this research has a strict time limitation, a longitudinal method is not

possible. Attitudes usually take a long time to shift, and as this study only measures the changes from 2016 to today, it will remain unclear how they will change in the recent future.

For the first two questions, the following hypotheses were created:

H1: There is a positive and significant correlation between consumer attitudes and green initiatives.

Based on the earlier findings (e.g. Moravcikova et al., 2017; Saad, 2006) on green practices and marketing having a positive effect on profits, the assumption is that the company with the most investments in green practices and marketing will have the most positive consumer attitude responses. This will be tested by comparing the results of consumer attitudes measured in the survey with the level of green practices of the three companies.

H2: Over the last few years, attitudes on the sustainability of the fast food industry have become more positive as a result of green marketing and green practices.

Following the earlier literature on sustainability and green practices (e.g. Morelli, 2011; Saad, 2006) it is likely that since fast food companies have implemented green strategies and green marketing, the overall consumer perceptions of the sustainability of fast food have shifted to more positive over the last few years.

For the third research question, the following hypothesis was created:

H3: Hesburger, McDonalds and Burger King all promote their sustainability in accordance with their genuine green actions

While it is projected that there will be differences in the levels of green actions the companies have implemented, this is likely to correspond to the level of their promotion of sustainability. Therefore, no green washing is predicted. The third research question will be examined by a quasi-quantitative method described in later chapters.

3.2 Research Design

The main body of the survey consisted of two different survey scales which were connected in order to study the correlation of sustainability and consumer attitudes. To measure the respondents' environmental values, a scale called the new ecological paradigm (NEP), created by Dunlap et al. (2000) was used. As can be seen in appendix 1, the scale was placed at the end of the survey, in order to prevent bias in the consumer attitude measurement. This model is perhaps one of the most acknowledged ones in the world in measuring attitudes towards environmental issues. It consists of fifteen environmental statements, which respondents rate with a 5-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, unsure, disagree, strongly disagree). With the NEP, a clear understanding of the respondents' environmental views is received, which is an important factor when analysing the results of the study. Next, for measuring consumer attitudes, a set of five items from a widely acknowledged model for measuring consumer attitudes by Sphears and Singh (2004) was implemented to measure the respondents' attitude towards the brands. The respondents were presented with a green advertisement from Hesburger, McDonalds and Burger King one at the time, and asked to rate their feelings on the brands by the following items: Unappealing/appealing; bad/good; unpleasant/pleasant; unfavourable/favourable; unlikable/likable. These items were measured by a 5-point likert scale. This set of items has been proven to accurately demonstrate consumers' attitudes towards a brand that they have recently seen an advertisement of (Sphears and Singh, 2004).

Necessary demographic questions for the survey were age, nationality, the frequency of purchasing fast food from the studied companies and gender. These three were considered to be possible influencing factors in the responses, and thus needed to be taken into account. Age was recorded in classes, as it is easier to analyse the variable in classes when the sample size is relatively small.

Before the initial launch, the survey was tested by a few respondents for clarity and length. Then, it was launched online and distributed to various social media groups in Facebook and via email to all students of Aalto University Mikkeli campus. In addition, there were respondents from two upper secondary schools in the Helsinki metropolitan area. In total, the sample size of the questionnaire was N=182, with 43% (N=77) being males and 57% (N=104) being females.

In addition to the third research question, to answer the main research question of whether the level of green investments and green marketing has a positive relationship with consumer attitudes, it was requisite to create a concrete measurement scale for the green activities of Burger King, McDonalds and Hesburger. The scale took in account the following sectors of green activities: Packaging, waste disposal, product line and environmental contribution. The information was gathered from the sustainability sections or reports from the companies' websites. If information of a specific sector was not presented, an assumption was made that the company does not have green practices on that sector. The companies were given one point from each sector that they had green practices on and based on the points was determined which company has invested the most in green initiatives. Subsequently, the previously mentioned ranking was compared to the results on consumer attitudes provided by the survey.

3.3. Limitations of the Method

The most severe limitation this study will likely face is the age limitation of the respondents. As the survey will be spread mostly in the channels of Aalto University, and in two upper secondary schools, majority of the respondents are projected to be within the age group of 16 to 25. If so, this will undoubtedly have a negative effect on the generalizability of the study to the whole population of Finland, as young adults are often more environmentally conscious. Another possible limitation is the respondents misinterpreting the survey questions, particularly among the upper secondary students, as their level of English might not be as high as among the university students. Thus, it is necessary to modify the questions into as easily comprehensible language as possible. Lastly, with surveys examining environmental attitudes, an issue of response bias is common, as the respondents may feel pressure to give socially acceptable answers. Therefore, the order of the questions will be carefully examined, to minimize all biases. The scale measuring environmental consciousness will be the last part of the survey, so the answers to consumer attitudes will not be affected by them.

4.0. Findings

4.1. Survey Findings

4.1.1. Demographics

The final sample size of the survey was N=182, with no invalid answers. As presented in figure 3, a slight majority (57%) reported as females, 42% reported as males and one person (1%) preferred not to state their gender. The age demographics were quite one-dimensional, as can be seen in figure 4. 130 respondents (71%) reported being 15-17 years old and 48 respondents (26%) being 18-24 years old. This sets a very strict limitation to the study, as a total of 98% of the respondents can be considered as young adults/teenagers. For nationalities, 94% reported being Finnish, with 6% being of other nationalities. These were Russian, Vietnamese, Indian, Chinese, Colombian and French.

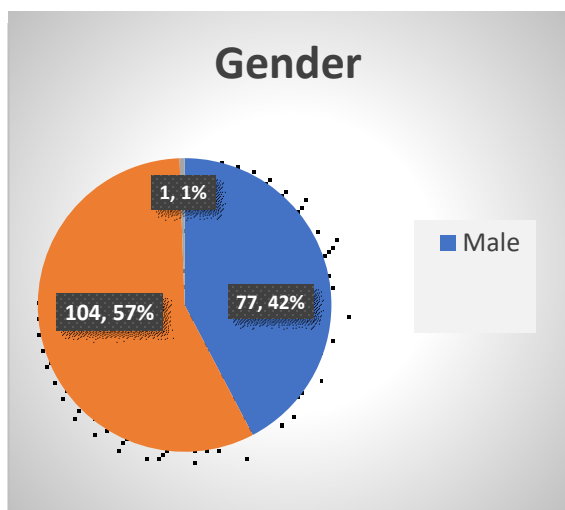


Figure 3: the gender distribution

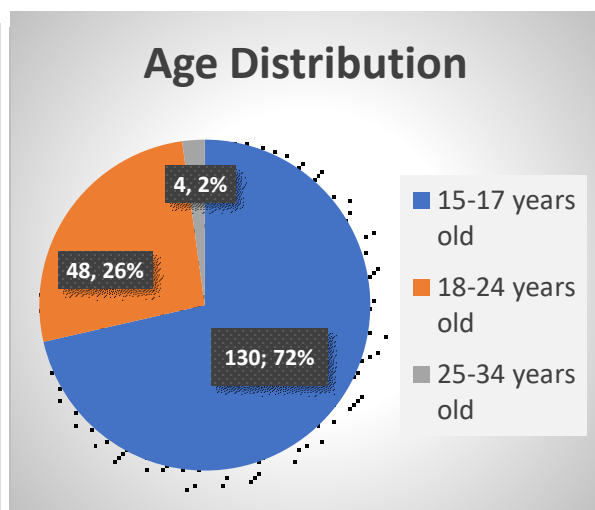


Figure 4: the age distribution

4.1.2. Sustainability Questions

As can be seen in figures 5 and 6, consumer attitudes towards the sustainability of the companies was quite unanimous. When asking which of the three fast food chains was the most sustainable, 79% (N=149) respondents answered Hesburger, which is a very significant number. McDonalds, on the other hand, was rated the least sustainable, with a percentage of 61 (N=111), with Burger King coming second with 31% (N=57) rating it the least sustainable. Hesburger was also considered to promote their green actions in advertising, with 79% (N=143) choosing Hesburger.

Interestingly, although McDonalds was rated as the least sustainable, 15% of the respondents said that they promote sustainability the most. This suggests that McDonalds are considered to even practice greenwashing by some respondents.

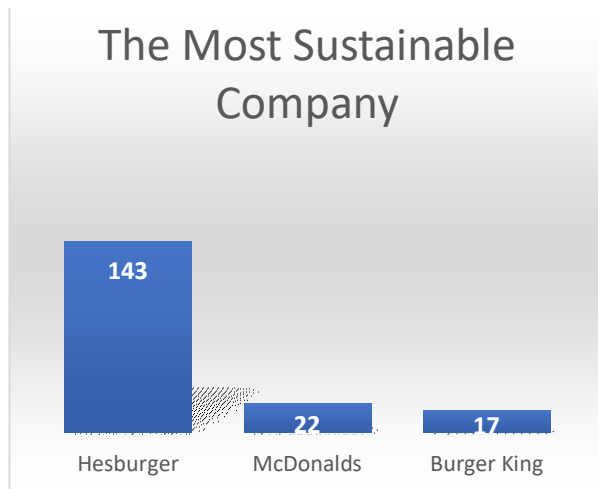


Figure 5: The most sustainable company

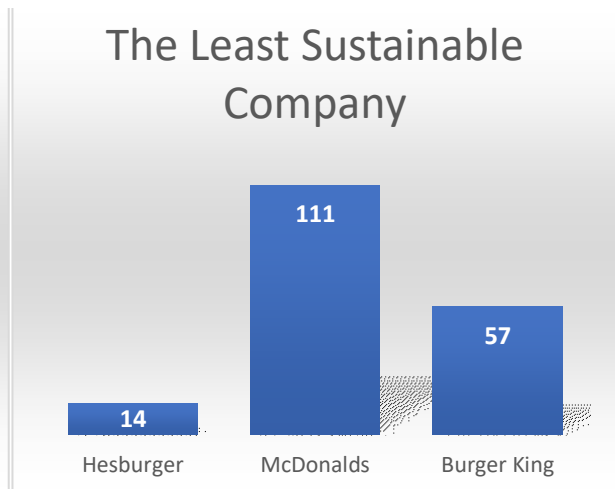


Figure 6: The least sustainable

Overall, the fast food industry was seen as more sustainable today compared to 2016. As presented in figure 7, 54% (N=99) of the respondents answered more sustainable (4) in the scale from much less sustainable to much more sustainable. 34% (N=62) answered that the fast food industry is as sustainable as before (3). The mean of the results was 3,54.

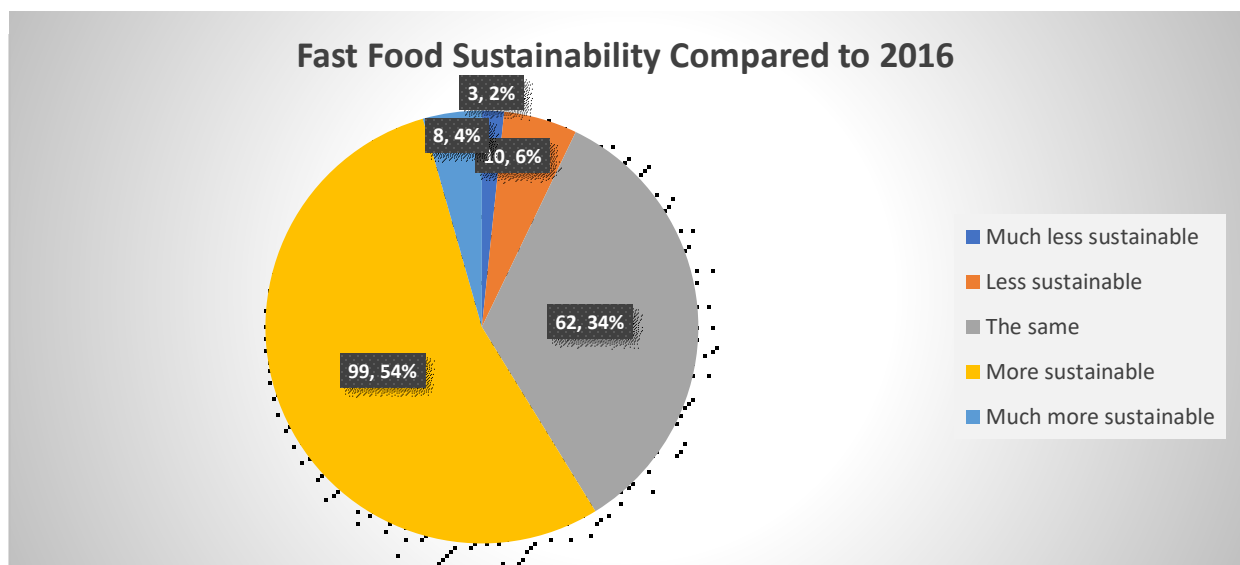


Figure 7: How sustainable fast food is seen compared to 2016

When asked about what has improved the most in terms of sustainability from the respondents answering 4 or 5 to the previous question, some variance occurred, as presented in figures 8 and 9. Product development was the most answered option with 50% (N=53) with both packaging and environmental contribution being the two second most answered options with 21% (N=23 and 22). An interesting observation was that when the respondents answering 3, 2 or 1 in the sustainability question were asked what should be improved, waste disposal was the most popular answer with 37% (N=28). This, however, is not a very significant difference to packaging (24%) and environmental contribution (31%). These results also confirm that product range has improved the most in terms of sustainability, as only 8% (N=6) thought it should be improved the most, indicating that it is widely regarded as sustainable.

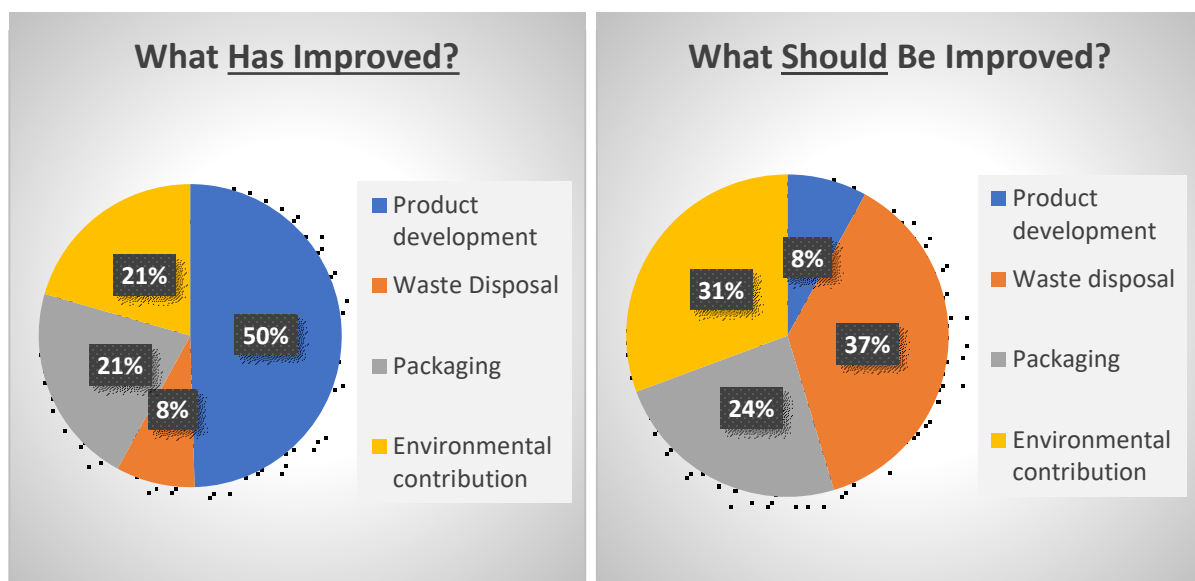


Figure 8: What has improved in fast food sustainability?

Figure 9: What should be improved in fast food sustainability?

While Hesburger was seen as the most sustainable of the three by a significant difference, this was not visible in the attitude measurement. The means of the three companies were very close to each other, with Hesburger having a mean of 3,53, Burger King 3,5 and McDonalds 3,36 in a scale of one to five. Thus, all of the six measured items, unlikable-likable, bad-good, unappealing-appealing, unfavourable-favourable, unethical-ethical and unpleasant-pleasant were slightly more positive than negative. However, as there is no statistically significant difference between attitudes towards Hesburger and the two other companies, it may be assumed that attitudes on a company's sustainability do not have a significant effect on the attitudes toward the company in general. This is also supported by the results on the ethical-unethical item of the consumer attitude scale. While the other items were very

close between the companies, Hesburger had a mean of 3,66, compared to McDonalds' 3,33 and Burger King's 3,41. This, again suggests that Hesburger is viewed as the ethical and sustainable option of the three, although in general they are viewed as somewhat equal.

Various tests were also conducted to measure the effects of demographics to the responses. Firstly, in figure 10, can be seen the correlation between gender and environmental consciousness. With a significance level of 0,007, it is evident that gender affects environmental consciousness so, that females are on average more environmentally conscious than males. On the other hand, age does not seem to have any remarkable effect on environmental consciousness, as can be seen in figure 11, the significance level is 0,771, suggesting that in this sample, age does not have any significant correlation with environmental consciousness. However, it is important to note that the survey did not have enough respondents from the age groups of 25 and above. Thus, it cannot be determined whether the older age groups would result in changes in the levels of environmental consciousness.

| | | What is your gender? | NEP_scale |
|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|
| What is your gender? | Pearson Correlation | 1 | ,199** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | ,007 |
| | N | 182 | 182 |
| NEP_scale | Pearson Correlation | ,199** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | ,007 | |
| | N | 182 | 182 |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 10: Correlation between gender and NEP scale

| | | NEP_scale | How old are you? |
|------------------|-----------------|-----------|------------------|
| NEP_scale | Pearson | 1 | ,022 |
| | Correlation | | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | ,771 |
| | N | 182 | 182 |
| How old are you? | Pearson | ,022 | 1 |
| | Correlation | | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | ,771 | |
| | N | 182 | 182 |

Figure 11: Correlation between age and NEP scale

4.1.3 Findings on the NEP Scale

Firstly, the reliability of the scale was tested with a reliability test. as can be seen in figure 12, the Cronbach's alpha is over 0,5, which indicates that the scale is reliable and no items were necessary to be removed.

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|------------------|--|------------|
| ,545 | ,500 | 15 |

Figure 12: reliability test on the NEP scale

In figure 13, the descriptive statistics of the NEP scale are presented. The environmental consciousness of the respondents was rather reserved. The mean of the respondents was 2,9 and as 3 stood for 'not sure' in the NEP scale, this indicates a relatively mild response to environmental issues. The standard deviation of the NEP scale was 0,32, which suggests a moderately low variance in the answers.

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------------|
| | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic |
| Scale | 182 | 1,20 | 3,53 | 2,9850 | ,32014 |
| Valid (listwise) | N182 | | | | |

Figure 13: The mean and standard deviation of the NEP scale

The correlation between the respondents' environmental consciousness and their perceptions on fast food sustainability was also measured. The results are presented in figure 14. With the significance level being considerably higher than 0,05, there does not appear to be any correlation between them.

| | | Compared to 2016, Do you think the fast food industry is more or less sustainable? | NEP_scale |
|--|---------------------|--|-----------|
| Compared to 2016, Do you think the fast food industry is more or less sustainable?:Much less sustainable | Pearson Correlation | 1 | ,044 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | ,555 |
| | N | 182 | 182 |
| NEP_scale | Pearson Correlation | ,044 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | ,555 | |
| | N | 182 | 182 |

Figure 14: Pearson correlation between the NEP scale and fast food sustainability perception

Also, the correlation between the NEP scale and the consumer attitudes on the three companies was tested with the Pearson correlation test. As can be seen in figure 15, the significance level is 0,001. This indicates that there is a high and positive correlation between environmental consciousness and the attitude responses towards the three companies.

| | | NEP_scale | consumer_attitude_scale |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| NEP_scale | Pearson | 1 | ,245** |
| | Correlation | | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | ,001 |
| | N | 182 | 182 |
| consumer_attitude_scale | Pearson | ,245** | 1 |
| | Correlation | | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | ,001 | |
| | N | 182 | 182 |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Figure 15: Correlation between the NEP scale and the consumer attitude scale

4.1.4 Other Findings

Next, the correlation between which company was seen the most sustainable and which company was thought to advertise their sustainability the most was tested. As can be seen in figure 16, the significance level was 0,002. Being lower than the required significance level of 0,01, the results indicate that there is a high correlation between the two variables.

4.2. Green Actions of Hesburger, McDonalds and Burger King in Finland

In order to analyse the effectiveness of the sustainability actions of these companies by consumer attitudes, it is essential to study the levels of their green actions and rate them. Thus, the sustainability reports of each company will be analysed. As stated in the methodology, the three companies were given a point from each sector of the business they had reported applying green practices to. However, it is important to note that as the sources are the companies themselves, all information should be examined critically, as biases are very possible. Firstly, Hesburger is the

only one out of the three with a complete sustainability report published in 2017. The law does not obligate companies to publish them in Finland, but Hesburger does so, nevertheless. However, the other two do have some information about their sustainability acts on their websites (Hesburger, 2017).

| | | Which of the three brands you consider the most sustainable? | Which of the three brands you consider to promote sustainability the most in their ads? |
|---|---------------------|--|---|
| Which of the three brands you consider the most sustainable? | Pearson Correlation | 1 | ,227** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | ,002 |
| | N | 182 | 182 |
| Which of the three brands you consider to promote sustainability the most in their ads? | Pearson Correlation | ,227** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | ,002 | |
| | N | 182 | 182 |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Figure 16: Correlation between the most sustainable company and the most advertised company

After reviewing the reports of all three companies, it is evident that Hesburger has invested most in green practices. It becomes clear from their report, that they are not satisfied with merely passing the minimum requirements of sustainability set by governmental organizations, but they desire to be the forerunners of sustainability in their field. Thus, Hesburger for example brings out the domesticity of their production by stating that seventeen of their twenty main ingredients are produced in Finland (Hesburger, 2017). While Hesburger presents precise data about their achievements towards sustainability both so far and plans for the future, the claims of Burger King and McDonalds are vaguer. For example, McDonalds, in their web page, simply state that they strive to recycle most of the waste generated in their restaurants. Simultaneously, Hesburger provides statistics of how effective their waste disposal is, with concrete plans of how to evolve it. Same applies for Burger King, as they merely state that they are aware of environmental issues and are satisfying all regulations

set to the industry. That being said, the reports indicate that McDonalds does invest more in sustainability than Burger King. For example, they highlight that their packaging in Finland is 100 percent recycled (McDonalds, 2019; Burger King, 2018).

After reviewing the sustainability reporting of all three companies, the following points were given in accordance to the previously mentioned scale:

To conclude, Hesburger's green strategy and green marketing strategy sets clearly to the extreme green category seen in figure 1, with green actions visible in all parts of the organization, from working clothes to waste disposal and energy consumption. McDonalds and Burger King on the other hand lay on the defensive green category, indicating that they have noticed the increasing demand for sustainability in their field, and Hesburger's considerable investments in green practices, and thus have answered with their own actions with for example vegetarian products. They also recognize and accept Hesburger's competitive advantage on the sustainability sector, and simply attempt to answer the competition on some sectors like product development.

| Sector | Hesburger (extreme green) | Mcdonalds (defensive green) | Burger King (defensive green) |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Packaging | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Waste disposal | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Energy consumption | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Product line | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Environmental contribution | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| total | 5 | 3 | 2 |

Figure 17: Ratings on sustainability

5.0. Analysis

When examining the results, it is important to recall the green strategy matrix in figure 2 with extreme green, defensive green, lean green and shaded green positionings. Based on the analysis of the survey, a conclusion can be made that while positioning as an extreme green company may be beneficial as it does work effectively to shape consumer attitudes on the company's sustainability as seen in the example of Hesburger, also implementing the defensive green strategy as McDonalds and Burger King have done could work as well. It is also important to note that the results of the survey present a short-time change, as the green strategies of the three companies are all relatively recent. It may take a while for consumer attitudes to shift, thus it will be interesting to see whether the attitudes will continue to change positively in the future.

The methodology of this study was based on a quantitative survey distributed to Finnish university and high school students. The results of the survey were then compared to the results from analysing the sustainability reporting of Hesburger, McDonalds and Burger King. By implementing the aforementioned methodology, this study was able to find answers to the research questions.

The first question was: How have Finnish customer attitudes on fast food chains' sustainability changed after their introduction of green marketing? This answered by the results in question five of the survey: Compared to 2016, Do you think the fast food industry is more or less sustainable? As the mean of the respondents was 3,54 and 54% of the respondents answered 4 (more sustainable), the fast food industry is seen to have become more sustainable in the recent years.

The second question was: Is there a causal relationship between consumer attitudes and green marketing in the fast food industry? The answer can be found by comparing the results on questions 8, 9, 10 and 11 measuring consumer attitudes towards the three companies in general and in regard to sustainability, with the ratings given for the level of green practices for each company in figure 3. Hesburger, with by far the highest rating of 5 in terms of sustainability, was set to score the highest mean in general attitudes, as well as the highest in question 11 on which of the companies is the most sustainable. As there was no significant difference in the means of general attitudes, the results indicate that there is little to no relationship with green practices and general consumer attitudes. However, Hesburger was chosen as the most sustainable of the three by 79% which indicates a significant

positive relationship with green practices and perceptions on a company's sustainability.

And finally, the third question was Are Hesburger, McDonalds and Burger King in fact implementing green strategies, or merely green washing? The answer was simply obtained by reviewing the companies' sustainability reports. The conclusion is, that none of the companies have committed green washing, at least at any serious level. Hesburger has positioned itself as an extreme green and is implementing green strategies in all sectors of its business. McDonalds and Burger King, on the other hand, do not want to identify themselves as extreme green companies currently, and hence do not promote themselves any more than answering to Hesburger's green product innovations with their own green products. Therefore, it can be said that all of the three companies match their green marketing and positioning with their actual green strategies.

The first hypothesis of the research was that the company with the highest points in green actions, will have the most positive consumer attitude responses in the survey. Hesburger was rated the most sustainable of the three companies, however there was no significant difference in the attitudes towards it. Therefore, the H1 is rejected. However, there was a positive correlation between the consumers' perception of sustainability and the companies' green actions, as Hesburger was rated the most sustainable of the three by 79% of the respondents. Thus, the results indicate that applying green actions and green marketing strategies do have a positive effect on consumer perception on sustainability, but not the company as a whole.

The second hypothesis H2 was that the attitudes toward fast food industry sustainability in general have become more positive. As the results in the survey indicate (54% answered the fast food industry to be more sustainable than in 2016), this hypothesis is accepted. Consumers have clearly noticed the sustainability trend in fast food, and their perceptions have changed accordingly. However, it is worthy to note that the fast food industry includes multiple other companies than the three mentioned in the survey. As the question in the survey was about sustainability in the fast food industry in general, there might not be any correlation between the green actions of Hesburger, McDonalds and Burger King, and the consumer perceptions. For example, there has been an increasing amount of smaller fast food chains

promoting sustainability. These smaller, sustainable chains could be the reason for the changed perceptions on fast food sustainability just as well.

Aside from the hypotheses, the survey provided some additional interesting findings. There was no correlation between environmental consciousness, age or gender and perceptions on fast food sustainability. This means that fast food is seen as more sustainable than before by broadly everyone regardless of their background. Furthermore, an interesting finding was that the attitudes towards the three companies were more positive than negative. This opposes the assumption that fast food would be seen as a particularly unsustainable field of business.

6.0. Discussion

6.1. Significance of the Findings

The first objective of the research, to find out whether the green strategies and green marketing in fast food has made consumers see fast food companies as more sustainable, was reached to some extent. The study proved that at least young consumers see the fast food industry as more sustainable than before. However, the accurate reasons for this change did not become clear. Thus, it can only be assumed that the companies' green marketing is the reason for the change. In addition, as attitudes are measured by a longitudinal method over time, it is indeterminate how the attitudes will keep changing in the near future.

The second objective, to explore the concrete level of green strategies Hesburger, McDonalds and Burger King implement and to examine whether it matches to their green marketing was also achieved to some extent. Hesburger was clearly distinguished as the most sustainable company, and Burger King and McDonalds were identified as merely defensive green companies. However, while reviewing the sustainability reports of the three companies did provide a relatively comprehensive overview of their green strategies, a more accurate understanding could have been received with more time and resources.

The third objective, to investigate the possible differences in consumer attitudes towards Hesburger, McDonalds and Burger King, was achieved as well. While

variances in the general attitudes were not significant, a significant difference was found in attitudes on their sustainability, and therefore, the objective can be considered as achieved. Overall, the chosen methodologies both for the quantitative research questions and the quasi-quantitative question were the correct ones. A survey was the only possible instrument to measure attitudes in a larger scale, and with limited time, research on the companies' own sustainability reporting was the only feasible method for examining the levels of green strategies.

6.2. Limitations of the Study

As was mentioned in the methodology-section, there were several projected limitations to the survey. Firstly, as 98% of the respondents were between ages 15-24, the results only represent the younger population of Finland. It is likely, that the answers of older respondents would differ significantly, as older people tend to be less environmentally conscious, for example.

Another limitation was due to time restrictions. Because of limited time and resources, for example the research on the green actions of the three companies was not as thorough as it could have been. With qualitative primary research like interviewing the company executives, a more comprehensive understanding of the companies' green actions could have been received.

7.0. Conclusion

7.1. Main Findings

Perhaps the most significant finding was the accepted H1, that Hesburger, having evidently the most investments in green strategies and implementing the extreme green positioning, is also perceived as the most sustainable fast food company from the trio of McDonalds, Burger King and Hesburger. The results support the existing literature, proving that green strategies do shape consumer attitudes on companies' sustainability. However, as the general attitudes towards the three companies did not have any significant differences, it can be concluded that even with Finnish young adults, widely perceived as environmentally conscious, the level of a company's

sustainability does not affect the general attitudes towards that company considerably, at least short term.

Another significant finding was that the sample perceived the fast food industry in general to have become more sustainable. This suggests that green strategies implemented in the field have succeeded in shaping attitudes on sustainability issues, and thus, managed to get rid of the reputation of being an unsustainable field of business, at least to some extent.

7.2. Implications for International Business

While studies have been completed around consumer attitudes in various fields, research connecting consumer attitudes and green marketing is still rather undeveloped. This study provides an understanding of how consumers react to green practices and marketing, especially in a field widely perceived as unsustainable. Therefore, the research could well be replicated in a different field with a similar situation of a recent shift to more sustainable practices. In addition, as the sample of the study was mostly young Finnish adults, known to be rather environmentally conscious, the results work as an antecedent for companies in other regions, where the shift to consumers' growing environmental concerns is still up and coming in the near future. Companies should carefully consider the best suited green strategy and take into account the possible green strategies of their competitors, as the study has shown McDonalds and Burger King to do. In conclusion, this research provides insight for companies seeking to increase their sustainability, especially on fields formally seen as unsustainable. It also offers a basis on any future research involving consumer attitudes and green marketing.

7.3. Suggestions for Future Research

As mentioned before, research on the relationship between consumer attitudes and green marketing is still somewhat undeveloped, although the demand for green products and services is projected to keep growing in the future. Thus, it is highly encouraged that researchers recognize this void in the field and for example examine the most effective green practices in terms of shaping consumer attitudes.

Moreover, as has been stated, a longitudinal method is necessary when measuring a variable like consumer attitudes. The change needs to be researched over a long period of time to receive a full understanding of the significance. Therefore, the suggestion is that this research would work as a basis for a longitudinal study, and would be repeated for example yearly.

On another aspect, consumer attitudes are also merely the first step in the larger concept of consumer behaviour. Attitudes measure the feelings and perceptions of consumers on a certain brand or product, while purchase intentions and buying behaviour convey the actual willingness to buy a product, which is often seen as the most important aspect. Therefore, future research is recommended to study the effects of green marketing and green practices to purchasing behaviour. This will most likely provide an even more tangible image of the relationship of the two concepts.

References

- Ajzen, I. (2001). "Nature and Operation of Attitudes." *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52(1), pp.27-58.
- Allen, M., 2017. "Quantitative Research, Purpose of." *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods*.
- Alsmadi, S. (2007). "Green Marketing and the Concern over the Environment: Measuring Environmental Consciousness of Jordanian Consumers." *Journal of Promotion Management*, 13(3-4), pp.339-361.
- Argyriou, E. and Melewar, T. (2011). "Consumer Attitudes Revisited: A Review of Attitude Theory in Marketing Research". *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 13(4), pp.431-451.
- Bettman, J., Luce, M. and Payne, J. (1998). "Constructive Consumer Choice Processes". *Journal of Consumer Research*, 25(3), pp.187-217.
- Burgerking.fi. 2018. *Vastuullisuus*. [online] Available at: <<http://www.burgerking.fi/corp-respon>> [Accessed 9 March 2020].
- Cronin, J., Smith, J., Gleim, M., Ramirez, E. and Martinez, J. (2011). "Green marketing strategies: an examination of stakeholders and the opportunities they present". *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 39(1), pp.158-174.
- Dunlap, R., Van Liere, K., Mertig, A. and Jones, R. (2000). "New Trends in Measuring Environmental Attitudes: Measuring Endorsement of the New Ecological Paradigm: A Revised NEP Scale". *Journal of Social Issues*, 56(3), pp.425-442.

Eagly, A. H., & Chaiken, S. (1993). "The psychology of attitudes". *Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers*.

Ginsberg, J. (2004). "Choosing the Right Green Marketing Strategy". *MIT Sloan Management Review*.

Groening, C., Sarkis, J. and Zhu, Q. (2017). "Green marketing consumer-level theory review: A compendium of applied theories and further research directions". *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 172, pp.1848-1866.

Gürlek, M. and Tuna, M. (2017). "Reinforcing competitive advantage through green organizational culture and green innovation". *The Service Industries Journal*, 38(7-8), pp.467-491.

Guo, Y., Xia, X., Zhang, S. and Zhang, D. (2018). "Environmental Regulation, Government R&D Funding and Green Technology Innovation: Evidence from China Provincial Data". *Sustainability*, 10(4), p.940.

Hesburger, (2017). *Vastuullisuusraportti*. pp. 47-61.

Jackson, G., Ahuja, V. "Dawn of the digital age and the evolution of the marketing mix". *J Direct Data Digit Mark Pract* **17**, 170–186 (2016).

Johnston, P., Santillo, D. and Everard, M. (2007). "Reclaiming the Definition of Sustainability". *Environmental Science and Pollution Research*, 14(1).

Kuchinka, D., Balazs, S., Gavriltea, M. and Djokic, B., 2018. "Consumer Attitudes toward Sustainable Development and Risk to Brand Loyalty". *Sustainability*, 10(4).

Kumar, P. and Ghodeswar, B. (2015). "Green Marketing Mix". *International Journal of Asian Business and Information Management*, 6(3), pp.42-59.

Líšková, Z., Cudlínová, E., Pártlová, P. and Petr, D. (2016). "Importance of Green Marketing and Its Potential". *Visegrad Journal on Bioeconomy and Sustainable Development*, 5(2), pp.61-64.

Luo, X. and Bhattacharya, C. (2006). "Corporate Social Responsibility, Customer Satisfaction, and Market Value". *Journal of Marketing*, 70(4), pp.1-18.

Mathur, L. and Mathur, I. (2000). "An Analysis of the Wealth Effects of Green Marketing Strategies". *Journal of Business Research*, 50(2), pp.193-200.

Mcdonalds.fi. 2019. *Laatukriteerit*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.mcdonalds.fi/fi/tutustu/vastuullisuus/laatukriteerit.html>> [Accessed 9 March 2020].

Moravcikova, D., Krizanova, A., Kliestikova, J. and Rypakova, M. (2017). "Green Marketing as the Source of the Competitive Advantage of the Business". *Sustainability*, 9(12), p.2218.

Morelli, J. (2011). Environmental Sustainability: "A Definition for Environmental Professionals". *Journal of Environmental Sustainability*, 1(1), pp.1-10.

- Polonsky, M.J. (1994). "An introduction to green marketing". *Electron. Green J.* 1 (2).
- Porter, M. E., and Van der Linde, C. (1995). "Green and Competitive: Ending the Stalemate". *Harvard Business Review*, 73(5), 120–134.
- Saad, L. (2006). "Americans See Environment as Getting Worse". *Gallup*.
- Schlosser, A. (2003). "Experiencing Products in the Virtual World: The Role of Goal and Imagery in Influencing Attitudes versus Purchase Intentions". *Journal of Consumer Research*, 30(2), pp.184-198.
- Şen, Yasemin. (2016). "Can Fast-Food Industry Go Sustainable? A Company Evidence From Chicago." *Semantic Scholar*.
- Sharma, A., Iyer, G.R., Mehrotra, A., Krishnan, R., 2010. "Sustainability and business- to-business marketing: a framework and implications". *Ind. Mark. Manag.* 39 (2),
- Soewarno, N., Tjahjadi, B. and Fithrianti, F. (2019). "Green innovation strategy and green innovation". *Management Decision*, 57(11), pp.3061-3078.
- Spears, N. and Singh, S. (2004). "Measuring Attitude toward the Brand and Purchase Intentions". *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising*, 26(2), pp.53-66.
- Violeta, S., Gheorghe, I. (2009). "The green strategy mix - a new marketing approach." *Knowl. Manag. Innovat. Adv. Econ. Anal. Solut.* 1. pp.1344-1347
- Yıldırım, S., Yıldırım, D. and Gedikli, A., 2016. "Sustainable Consumption Trends in the World in the Context of Green Economy and Sustainability." *Practice, Progress, and Proficiency in Sustainability*, pp.65-84.

APPENDICIES

Appendix 1

Thank you for answering this questionnaire. The survey measures attitudes towards the fast food industry in Finland. It will take approximately four minutes to answer.

This research is done under the supervision of Susan Grinsted Ph.D. in Aalto University School of Business, Mikkeli Campus. The survey is anonymous, and the data will be used solely for this thesis project.

By clicking next, you agree to have read the description and agree to the terms described.

1. What is your gender? *

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Prefer not to say

2. How old are you? *

- ☐ 15-17 years old

- 18-24 years old
- 25-34 years old
- 35-44 years old
- 45-54 years old
- 55-64 years old
- 65+ years old

3. What is your nationality? *

- Finnish
- Other, please specify:

4. How often do you go to Burger King, McDonalds or Hesburger? *

- never
- less than once a month
- 1-2 times a month
- 2-4 times a month
- more than 4 times a month

5. Compared to 2016, Do you think the fast food industry is more or less sustainable? *

(1=much less sustainable 2=less sustainable 3=the same 4=more sustainable 5=much more sustainable)

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|-----------------------|
| Much less sustainable | | | | | | Much more sustainable |

6. In your opinion, which sector has increased fast food sustainability the most? *

- Packaging
- Waste disposal
- Product development (eg. vegetarian products)
- Environmental contribution (eg. carbon footprint compensation)

In your opinion, what should be improved the most in terms of sustainability in the fast food sector? *

- Packaging
- Waste disposal
- Product lines (eg. vegetarian products)
- Environmental contribution (eg. carbon footprint compensation)

8. Please rate your feelings on the brand in the ad (Hesburger) *

The ad informs that the three products have all been 100% carbon compensated

**HIILIJALANJÄLKI
HYVITETTY**

KASVISTORTILLA

SOIJATORTILLA

TORTILLA

KERROSHAMPURILAINEN

LATAA HESBURGER-SOVELLUS

★ **HESBURGER®** ★

Makusi mukaan

| | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Very unpleasant | | | | | | Very pleasant |
| Very bad | | | | | | Very good |
| Very unappealing | | | | | | Very appealing |

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Very unfavourable | Very favourable |
| Very unlikable | Very likable |
| Very unethical | Very ethical |

Please rate your feelings on the brand in the ad (Burger King)

An ad of Burger King's newly launched vegan burger.



| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|-----------------|
| Very unpleasant | | | | | | Very pleasant |
| Very bad | | | | | | Very good |
| Very unfavourable | | | | | | Very favourable |
| Very unappealing | | | | | | Very appealing |
| Very unethical | | | | | | Very ethical |
| Very unlikable | | | | | | Very likable |

10. Please rate your feelings towards the brand of the picture. (McDonalds)

An ad promoting the new vegan burger of McDonalds.

Hampurilaislimuvegaanille.



McVegan 3€

McVegan myynnissä Tampereen ravintoloissa 4.10.-21.11.2017 klo 10-06.



©McDonald's 2017. The Golden Arches and "i'm lovin' it" are trademarks of McDonald's Corporation and its affiliates.

1 2 3 4 5

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Very unpleasant | Very pleasant |
| Very bad | Very good |
| Very unfavourable | Very favourable |
| Very unappealing | Very appealing |
| Very unethical | Very ethical |
| Very unlikable | Very likable |

11. Which of the three brands you consider the most sustainable?

- ☐ Burger King
- ☐ Hesburger
- ☐ McDonalds

12. Which of the three brands you consider the most unsustainable?

- ☐ Burger King
- ☐ Hesburger
- ☐ McDonalds

13. Which of the three brands you consider to promote sustainability the most in their ads? *

- ☐ Burger King
- ☐ Hesburger
- ☐ McDonalds

14. Please rate the statements on the level in which you agree *

Strongly
disagree

Disagree

Not sure

Agree

Strongly agree

We are approaching the limit of the number of people the Earth can support.
*

Humans have the right to modify the natural environment to suit their needs.
*

When humans interfere with nature it often produces disastrous consequences.
*

The smartness of humans will insure that we do not make the Earth unlivable.

Humans are seriously abusing the environment. *

The Earth has plenty of natural resources if we just learn how to develop them. *

Plants and animals have as much right as humans to exist. *

The balance of nature is strong enough to cope with the impacts of modern industrial nations. *

Despite our special abilities, humans are still subject to the laws of nature. *

The so-called "ecological crisis" facing humankind has been greatly exaggerated. *

The Earth is like a spaceship with very limited room and resources. *

Humans were meant to rule over the rest of nature. *

The balance of nature is very delicate and easily upset. *

Humans will eventually learn enough about how nature works to be able to control it *

If things continue on their present course, we will soon experience a major ecological catastrophe. *

